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Letter dated 30 September 2009 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the Ministerial Declaration adopted at the thirty-third annual meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77, held at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 25 September 2009 (see annex).

On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I would appreciate it if the present letter and its annex were circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda items 15, 16, 19, 40, 42, 44, 47, 48, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 63, 70, 114, 118, 120, 121, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 136, 137 and 145.

(*Signed*) Abdalmahmood Abdalhaleem **Mohamad**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations
Chairman of the Group of 77

Annex to the letter dated 30 September 2009 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Ministerial Declaration adopted at the thirty-third annual meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77

New York, 25 September 2009

The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Member States of the Group of 77 and China met at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on 25 September 2009 on the occasion of their 33rd Annual Meeting to review the world economic situation and to address the development challenges facing developing countries, and adopted the following Declaration:

1. The Ministers expressed their concern over the multiple inter-related and mutually exacerbating current global crises, in particular the world financial and economic crisis, the volatile energy prices, the food crisis and the challenges posed by climate change, which could further undermine the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

2. The Ministers stressed that the current financial and economic crisis as well as the failures and gaps in the international financial governance have served to underscore the urgent need for the UN to assume a central and proactive role in international economic issues.

3. The Ministers noted that the crisis has further highlighted the urgent need for a substantive and comprehensive reform of the international economic and financial system and architecture, including policies, mandates, scope and governance, to better enable it to respond and prevent financial and economic emergencies, effectively promote development and equitably serve the needs of Member States, particularly developing countries. International financial institutions in particular must have a clear development orientation. They called on all Member States to participate in an open, inclusive and transparent dialogue for a new international economic and financial system and architecture that would ensure, *inter alia*, adequate policy space to developing countries.

4. The Ministers recalled the estimation by the World Bank of the significant shortage of $ 1 trillion that developing countries are facing in 2009. They underscored the importance of allocating new and additional resources, as a matter of priority, to developing countries to appropriately address the adverse impacts of the crisis.

5. The Ministers welcomed the recognition by the international community for the need for more coordinated and comprehensive response to mitigate the negative impact of the global financial crisis in particular for developing countries as well as the overdue necessary structural reform needed to prevent future economic turmoil as contained in the outcome document of the "United Nations Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its impact on Development", which was held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from 24 to 30 June 2009. They expressed their disappointment over the lack of concrete measures or time-bound commitments to meet specific needs relating to development assistance, trade, finance, markets access, debt, and sustainable development.

6. The deepening crisis threatens to negatively affect the indebtedness of developing countries. This growing indebtedness limits the ability of these States to enact the appropriate fiscal measures to mitigate the impact of the crisis or engage in development financing. We affirm that the appropriate measures must be taken to address the impact of the crisis on the indebtedness of developing states and to avoid a new debt crisis.

7. The Ministers reiterated the urgent need for the international community to adopt an effective, equitable, durable and development-oriented solution to the debt problems of developing countries, particularly LDCs, including through total debt cancellation, without discrimination or conditionalities, and increased concessional financial flows.

8. The Ministers emphasized in this regard the importance of the General Assembly open–ended Working Group established according to its resolution 63/305 and underscored the need to immediately commence substantive consideration of all issues contained in the outcome document of the "UN Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development". They further emphasized that the Working Group should make concrete recommendations to the General Assembly as early as possible on actions to redress the structural failures of the international financial and economic system, and mitigate the impact of the crisis on development.

9. The Ministers reaffirmed the high priority that developing countries attach to the Financing for Development process as a valuable opportunity to secure support for their common vision to address major development finance constraints faced by all developing countries. In this regard, they called for the speedy implementation of all commitments contained in the Monterrey Consensus and in the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development. They also emphasized the need for continued strengthening of the FfD follow-up process and therefore committed to actively participate in the High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development scheduled to be held in New York on 23 and 24 November 2009.

10. The Ministers expressed their serious concern over the talks of the WTO Doha Round that may preclude finishing negotiations this year and considered it a serious setback for the Doha Round. They reiterated the call to the developed countries to demonstrate the flexibility and the political will necessary for breaking the current impasse in the negotiations with a view to concluding the Round by 2010. They reaffirmed the need to strictly adhere to the development mandate of the Doha Ministerial Declaration, the decision of the General Council of the World Trade Organization of 1 August 2004 and the Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration, which place development at the heart of the multilateral trading system.

11. The Ministers urged developed countries to take measures to increase investment flows, particularly foreign direct investments, to developing countries and avoid protectionist measures, which impede such flows. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to a universal, ruled based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system.

12. The Ministers stressed the importance of facilitating the accession of all developing countries, in particular the LDCs that apply for membership in the World Trade Organization (WTO), without

political impediments, in an expeditious and transparent manner and with full observance of the principles of special and differential treatment for developing countries.

13. The Ministers reaffirmed that hunger constitutes a violation of human dignity and called for urgent measures at the national, regional and international levels for its elimination. They also reaffirmed the right of everyone to have access to safe and nutritious food consistent with the right to food and the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger, so as to be able to fully develop and maintain his or her physical and mental capacities.

14. The Ministers reaffirmed that eradication of poverty is the greatest global challenge facing the world today. They reiterated the importance of developing countries determining their own food security strategies in their efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger. They noted regional initiatives taken by G-77 Member States in this regard, including the holding of the Presidential Summit in Managua, Nicaragua on Food, Security and Sovereignty and the African Summit in Sharm-El-Sheik.

15. The Ministers stressed the urgent need for the international community, particularly the developed countries, to take effective measures to allocate new and additional resources to assist developing countries to respond efficiently to both the imminent and long-term challenges of food security. The Ministers reaffirmed the importance of developing strategies for South-South cooperation in providing emergency responses, and in structuring actions to overcome the current food crisis.

16. The Ministers welcomed the convening of the World Summit on Food Security by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations from 16 to 17 November 2009, and expressed the hope that the Summit will translate the political will and the commitment to address these important issues.

17. The Ministers noted with deep concern that the lack of effective implementation of the internationally agreed development goals including the MDGs remains the Achilles Heel of the UN development agenda and stressed that securing the effective and full implementation of the agreed goals and commitments must be of the highest priority. The Ministers urged development partners to demonstrate a similar alacrity in implementing their part of the commitments whether in external debt, development assistance, financing, trade, technology transfer and other areas of cooperation. Building on General Assembly resolution 60/265, the United Nations should develop an intergovernmental consensus for the establishment of effective mechanisms to review and follow up the implementation of MDGs and IADGs.

18. The Ministers reaffirmed that economic and social development is the centerpiece of the objectives and operational activities of the United Nations. The achievement of the internationally agreed development goals including the MDGs should continue to be the over-arching framework of the development activities of the UN system. The Ministers reiterated the need to fully implement all agreed commitments from all the major United Nations summits and conferences in the economic, social and related fields. They further emphasized the need for a strengthened global partnership for development, based on the recognition of national leadership and ownership of development strategies. In this regard, they welcomed the decision by the General Assembly to hold a UN Summit on the MDGs in 2010, as agreed by resolution 63/302.

19. The Ministers recognized the special needs of Africa, the only continent currently not on track to achieve the internationally agreed development goals including the Millennium Development Goals, and called for the full and timely implementation of all commitments made so as to enable African countries to enter the mainstream of the world economy.

20. The Ministers reaffirmed the political declaration on "Africa's development needs: state of implementation of various commitments, challenges and the way forward", adopted at the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on 22 September 2008. They recalled the commitment of all States to establish a monitoring mechanism to follow up on all commitments related to the development of Africa as contained in the political declaration on "Africa's development needs" and stressed that all commitments to and by Africa should be effectively implemented and given appropriate follow-up by the international community and Africa itself.

21. The Ministers reaffirmed the special needs of and underscored the need to address the challenges faced by Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries, and Small Island Developing States. In this regard, the Ministers urged the international community and the UN system to address those needs and vulnerabilities and take urgent and concrete action to fulfill their commitments, through the full and effective implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010, the Almaty Programme of Action, the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. The Ministers looked forward to the General Assembly High level Meeting to review the Mauritius Strategy in 2010.

22. The Ministers recognized the special challenges and needs of the Least Developed Countries particularly in the face of new and emerging challenges. The Ministers fully supported the convening of the Fourth UN Conference on LDCs, in accordance with paragraph 114 of the Brussels Programme of Action towards the end of the current decade. The Ministers stressed that the Fourth UN Conference on LDCs will represent an important opportunity for the LDCs and their partners to critically review past performance, especially in areas of failures and weak implementation, and develop a new common action-oriented strategic framework for the next decade for effectively assisting the LDCs in their development efforts in a growingly complex and changing circumstances.

23. The Ministers called for continued support for the development efforts of middle-income developing countries, including through targeted and substantial technical assistance, and the promotion of new partnerships and cooperation arrangements, including bilateral arrangements, as well as by working in competent multilateral, regional and international fora, in support of national development strategies. In this regard, the Ministers welcomed the Third International Ministerial Conference on Developmental Cooperation with Middle-Income Countries that took place in Windhoek, Namibia, from 4 to 6 August 2008, and the subsequent adoption of General Assembly resolution 62/223 on development cooperation with middle-income countries.

24. The Ministers also called for continued support for the development efforts of low-income developing countries in addressing their social, economic and developmental needs including through

the provision of technical, financial and other forms of assistance, promotion of and strengthening of partnerships and cooperation arrangements at all levels.

25. The Ministers also reaffirmed the special needs and challenges faced by countries emerging from conflicts. In this regard, the Ministers urged the international community and the UN system to address these needs and challenges and take urgent and concrete action in the area of financial assistance and technical support and infrastructure development, in order to achieve the internationally agreed development goals including the MDGs.

26. The Ministers acknowledged that the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities as well as their social and economic conditions. In this regard, the Ministers reiterated that UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol remains the central multilateral framework for cooperative action to address climate change.

27. The Ministers also urged developed countries to undertake ambitious and enhanced commitments under the Kyoto Protocol in subsequent commitment periods. They also urged the international community to assist developing countries to address the consequences of climate change, particularly through new, additional and predictable financial resources, capacity building, and access to and transfer of technology.

28. The Ministers reaffirmed that responses to climate change should be coordinated with social and economic development in an integrated manner, with a view to avoiding adverse impact on the latter, taking into account the legitimate priority needs of developing countries for the achievement of sustained economic growth and the eradication of poverty. In this context, the Ministers look forward to the positive outcomes of the Fifteenth Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Conventions on Climate Change and the Fifth Session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, to be held in Copenhagen, Denmark from 7 to 18 December 2009.

29. The Ministers stressed the importance of improving understanding of the impact of climate change on the ocean and the need to consider the ocean dimensions to inform adaptation and mitigation strategies. In this regard, the Ministers expressed appreciation to the Government of Indonesia for the holding of the World Ocean Conference in Manado, Indonesia from 11 to 15 May 2009, which adopted the "Manado Ocean Declaration", and underlined the need for an integrated coastal and ocean management approach in adapting to the effects of climate change on the ocean.

30. The Ministers looked forward to the successful outcome of the forthcoming Tenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP-10), which will be held from 18 to 29 October 2010 in Nagoya, Japan.

31. The Ministers also welcomed COP-9 Decision IX/33 calling for a high-level special event in conjunction with the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly to mark the International Year of Biodiversity in 2010 and invites all the members to be represented at the highest level possible at the high-level segment of the 65th session of the United Nations General Assembly to be held in

New York on 20 September 2010 with participation of Heads of State and Government convened to celebrate the International Year on Biodiversity.

32. The Ministers also welcomed COP-9 Decision IX/25 for the elaboration of a Multi-year Plan of South-South Cooperation on Biodiversity for Development to be submitted to COP-10. In this context, the Ministers expressed their support to the ongoing efforts by the Executive Secretary of the CBD Secretariat towards the elaboration of a Multi-year Plan of South-South Cooperation in close collaboration with the Chair of the Group of 77 and welcomed the convening of consultative preparatory meetings of the Steering Committee to be held in Montreal, Canada on 29 October 2009 and in Khartoum, Republic of the Sudan, in early 2010.

33. The Ministers expressed their concern over the increased frequency and scale of natural disasters in recent years which have resulted in massive loss of life and long term negative social, economic and environmental consequences for countries, particularly developing countries. They called upon the international community, particularly developed countries and the relevant international organizations to increase their assistance to the affected states, including by supporting efforts towards enhancing their national and regional capacities for implementation of plans and strategies for preparedness, rapid response, recovery and development on earthquakes, tsunamis, landslides, and volcanic eruptions, and extreme weather events such as heat waves, severe droughts and floods, sand and dust storms.

34. The Ministers welcomed the progress achieved by the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF) on the process to enhance international cooperation and means of implementation for sustainable forest management and the achievement of the global objectives on forest, in particular to improve access to and mobilization of international financial resources in this field for developing countries. Furthermore, the Ministers called for an expeditious formal adoption and implementation of the decisions of the UNFF to, *inter alia*, make recommendations on the establishment of a voluntary global forest fund.

35. The Ministers recognized further the challenge posed by desertification and land degradation and resolve to support and strengthen the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa to address causes of desertification and land degradation, as well as poverty resulting from land degradation. In this context, the Ministers looked forward to the successful outcome of the Ninth Session of the Conference of the Parties to be held in Buenos Aires, Argentina from 21 September to 2 October 2009.

36. The Ministers welcomed the outcome of the Seventeenth Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-17) on the thematic issues "Africa, Agriculture, Drought and Desertification, Land and Rural Development". In this regard, the Ministers reaffirmed the need to implement the decisions and commitments contained in this document.

37. The Ministers expressed their support to convene a World Summit on Sustainable Development in Brazil in 2012 to review the 20-year progress achieved in the implementation of the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Sustainable Development, held in

Rio de Janeiro, on 3-14 June 1992, including the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg, South Africa, on 26 August-4 September 2002.

38. The Ministers welcomed the adoption of the ECOSOC Ministerial Declaration on "Implementing the Internationally Agreed Goals and Commitments in regard to Global Public Health" and called upon the international community to implement it in order to achieve global public health for sustainable development.

39. The Ministers firmly rejected the imposition of laws and regulations with extraterritorial impact and all other forms of coercive economic measures, including unilateral sanctions against developing countries, and reiterated the urgent need to eliminate them immediately. They emphasized that such actions not only undermine the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law, but also severely threaten the freedom of trade and investment. They, therefore, called on the international community neither to recognize these measures nor apply them.

40. The Ministers reiterated the commitment taken in the relevant United Nations General Assembly resolutions to operationalize the World Solidarity Fund, and recalled the request made by the Second South Summit held in Doha, Qatar, from 12 to 16 June 2005, to operationalize the World Solidarity Fund and called upon donors countries, countries in a position to do so, international organizations, the private sector and individuals, to contribute to the Fund in order to enable it to start its activities and to allow it to contribute to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs, particularly poverty eradication.

41. The Ministers valued and supported the initiative by H.E. President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, President of the Republic of Tunisia, calling for proclaiming 2010 a "World Youth Year", and for organizing during the same year, under the auspices of the United Nations, and in cooperation with the concerned international organizations, a world youth conference to be attended by young people from all parts of the world and which shall focus on youth issues and be crowned with the issuing of an international pact, to serve as a close tie uniting all young people of the world in their commitment to the common universal values.

42. The Ministers reaffirmed the need to fulfill all official development assistance commitments including the commitments made by many developed countries to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product for official development assistance to developing countries by 2015 and to reach the level of at least 0.5 per cent of gross national product for official development assistance by 2010, as well as a target of 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of gross national product for official development assistance to least developed countries.

43. The Ministers strongly urged all countries to strengthen the protection of the human rights of all migrants and reiterated their determination to continue to address the challenges and opportunities that migration presents to countries of origin, transit and destination.

44. The Ministers reaffirmed the need to address and promote conditions for cheaper, faster and safer transfer of remittances in both source and recipient countries, bearing in mind that remittances cannot be considered as a substitute for foreign direct investment, official development assistance, debt relief or other public sources of finance development.

45. The Ministers noted the results of the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development in September 2006 in New York, held for purpose of discussing the multidimensional aspects of international migration and development, which recognized the relationship between international migration, development and human rights. In this context, the Heads of State and Government welcomed the decision of the General Assembly to hold a one-day informal thematic debate in 2011 on international migration and development and the new High-level Dialogue on International Migration in 2013.

46. The Ministers called for combating and penalizing corruption in all its forms as well as the laundering of proceeds of corruption, preventing the transfer of illicitly acquired assets, and working for the prompt return of such assets through asset recovery consistent with the principles of the UN Convention against Corruption, and in this regard the Ministers stressed the need for transparency in financial institutions, inviting work on the identification and tracing of financial flows linked to corruption, the freezing or seizing of assets derived from corruption and the return of such assets, consistent with the Convention, and encouraging the promotion of human and institutional capacity-building in this regard. The Ministers called for active participation in the Third Session of the Conference of the States Parties of the UN Convention against Corruption to be held in Doha, Qatar, from 9 to 13 November 2009.

47. The Ministers of the States Parties to the Mine Ban Convention recognized the significance of the Second Review Conference and expressed their appreciation for the commitment of Colombia to prepare and host that Conference to be held in Cartagena, from 30 November to 4 December 2009. Furthermore, they welcomed the regional conferences and workshops in preparation for the Conference and appreciated the efforts of the host States in that regard.

48. The Ministers affirmed that the sovereign equality of Member States, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, must be respected, including throughout reform processes, irrespective of the contributions that individual Member States make to the budget of the Organization. Governance arrangements and decision-making process exercised through the General Assembly, its Main Committees and subsidiary bodies are the sole responsibility of the Member States in accordance with the United Nations Charter. They upheld the role of the Member States, through the relevant main committee of the General Assembly, in the consideration of budgetary and administrative matters.

49. The Ministers reaffirmed that the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly is the sole Main Committee of the organization entrusted with responsibilities for administrative, financial and budgetary matters. In this regard, the Ministers requested that any budgetary, financial, and administrative related matters including those being dealt with in connection with the establishment of a peacekeeping operation or a special political mission be discussed solely in the framework of the Fifth Committee, in conformity with the UN Charter.

50. The Ministers strongly supported the oversight role performed by the General Assembly, as well as its relevant intergovernmental and expert bodies, in the planning, programming, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation. They reaffirmed that any Secretariat and management reform efforts, including on its budget process, must not intend to change the intergovernmental, multilateral and

international nature of the organization, but must strengthen the ability of Member States to perform their oversight and monitoring role. They also reaffirmed the right of the entire membership of the United Nations to pronounce on the administration of the Organization, including on its budgetary matters.

51. The Ministers further reaffirmed the principle of "capacity to pay" as the fundamental criterion in the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations and rejected any change to the elements of the current methodology for the preparation of the scale of assessments aimed at increasing the contributions of developing countries. In this regard, they emphasized that the core elements of the current methodology of the scale of assessment, such as base period, Gross National Income, conversion rates, low per capita income adjustment, gradient, floor, ceiling for Least Developed Countries and debt stock adjustment must be kept intact and are not negotiable.

52. The Ministers stressed that the current maximum assessment rate, or ceiling, had been fixed as a political compromise and is contrary to the principle of the capacity to pay and a fundamental source of distortion in the scale of assessments. In this context, they urged the General Assembly to undertake a review of this arrangement, in accordance with paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 55/5 C.

53. The Ministers affirmed that the current principles and guidelines for the apportionment of the expenses of peacekeeping operations approved by the General Assembly in its relevant resolutions should constitute a basis for any discussion on the peacekeeping scale. In this regard, the Ministers stressed that the peacekeeping scale must clearly reflect the special responsibilities of the permanent members of the Security Council for the maintenance of peace and security. The Ministers also recalled that the economically less developed countries have limited capacity to contribute towards the budgets of peacekeeping operations. In this context, the Ministers emphasized that any discussion on the system of discounts applied to the peacekeeping scale should take into account the conditions of developing countries whose current positions must not be negatively affected.

54. The Ministers reaffirmed that the financial stability of the United Nations should not be jeopardized by arbitrary measures. The Ministers stressed that any efforts to use financial contributions to push for the adoption of certain proposals are counterproductive and violate the obligations of the Member States to provide resources for the Organization, as enshrined in its Charter.

55. The Ministers strongly reaffirmed the legal obligation of all member states to bear the financial expenses of the UN, in accordance with the Charter, and urged all member states to pay assessed contributions on time, in full and without conditions. They also stressed that the special and genuine difficulties faced by some developing countries that prevent them from meeting temporarily their financial obligations should be fully taken into account and that the decisions of the General Assembly on the agenda item "scale of assessments" must be responsive to such difficulties.

56. The Ministers stressed that the level of resources to be approved by the General Assembly must be commensurate with all mandated programmes and activities in order to ensure their full and effective implementation. They also reaffirmed the priorities of the Organization as approved by the

General Assembly and the need for the Secretary-General to reflect these priorities when presenting proposed programme budgets.

57. The Ministers reiterated that there is a need to strike a balance in reflecting the agreed priorities of the Organization in the allocation of resources to the United Nations regular budget, which is persistently to the detriment of the development activities.

58. In this context, the Ministers stressed that the strengthening of the United Nations and its role in international cooperation for development is essential to respond to current and future challenges and opportunities emanating from the process of globalization. They recognized that the United Nations needs to improve its capabilities and capacities to fully implement its mandates and to ensure the effective delivery of its programmes in the social and economic development field. In this regard, they urge the Secretary-General to further strengthen the development pillar of the whole organization, including its development account.

59. The Ministers stressed the importance of ensuring that the Secretariat meets the highest standards of accountability, transparency, integrity and ethical conduct. The Ministers, therefore, urged the Secretary-General, as a matter of priority, to define accountability in the Organization, establish clear accountability mechanisms to the General Assembly, and propose parameters for the application of accountability and instruments for its rigorous enforcement.

60. The Ministers expressed concern at the inadequate share of the developing countries in the United Nations system of procurement. They emphasized that the United Nations procurement should be on as wide a geographical basis as possible with preferential treatment for the developing countries. They further underlined that the United Nations supplier roster should be representative of the membership of the Organization and underscored the need to implement concrete measures to ensure greater market access by businesses from developing countries in United Nations procurement.

61. The Ministers stressed the need to increase the representation of developing countries, in particular at the senior levels, and to improve geographic distribution in the Secretariat and more transparency in recruitment process.

62. The Ministers reaffirmed the importance of the Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities, through which the General Assembly establishes key system-wide policy orientation for the development cooperation and country-level modalities of the UN system. The Ministers also reaffirmed that the TCPR should determine the course of action for UN operational activities and should not be superseded or preempted by other processes.

63. The Ministers reaffirmed their willingness to continue to engage constructively in the intergovernmental negotiations on system–wide coherence through the Joint Coordinating Committee of G-77 and NAM during the 64th Session of the General Assembly and reiterated their preference of an integrated process on all issues under discussion, with a view to achieving equal levels of progress in all areas as stated in General Assembly resolution 63/311.

64. The Ministers firmly rejected attempts to politicize the operational activities for development of the UN system and underscored the importance of the principles of neutrality and impartiality in the provision of development assistance.

65. The Ministers reiterated their call for the immediate withdrawal of Israel, the occupying Power, from the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan to the line of 4 June 1967 and from the remaining Lebanese occupied land. They reaffirmed their support for the Middle East peace process, begun in Madrid in 1991, aimed at achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the region, in accordance with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978) and the principle of land for peace. In this context, they also reaffirmed their support for the Arab Peace Initiative adopted at the Arab Summit in Beirut, renewed by the Arab Summits held in Riyadh in March 2007 and in Damascus in March 2008, and in Doha in March 2009.

66. The Ministers condemned the ongoing Israeli military campaign against the Palestinian people in Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which has resulted in the loss of civilian lives and the vast destruction of Palestinian properties, infrastructure and agricultural lands. The Ministers expressed deep concern about the further decline of the social and economic conditions of the Palestinian people, particularly in the besieged Gaza Strip, as a result of the illegal Israeli practices, including its illegitimate construction of settlements, the wall and bypass roads and the imposition of blockade closures. They called upon Israel, the occupying Power, to cease immediately all illegal measures impairing the Palestinian economy, including, in particular, restrictions on the movement of persons and goods throughout, into and out of the Occupied Territory and to release all remaining tax revenues due to the Palestinian Authority and to make reparation for all damages caused to Palestinian properties, institutions and infrastructure. They reiterated their call upon the international community to continue providing much needed developmental and humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people during this critical period particularly for the reconstruction and economic recovery in the Gaza Strip.

67. The Ministers expressed support for the assistance in the demining efforts and cluster bombs clearance in the south of Lebanon. They further expressed their deep concern about the lack of financial resources for carrying out the remaining demining and clearance of mines and cluster munitions in the south of Lebanon, and called upon the international donors and the United Nations system to provide the appropriate and adequate financial resources to the Mine Action Coordination Center South Lebanon in order to allow it to perform its task. The Ministers reiterated their call on Israel to complete the submission to the United Nations of adequate information on these mines and cluster munitions, as well as all remaining maps related to their locations, which are hindering the development and rehabilitation of the south of Lebanon and preventing the agricultural exploitation of vast areas of rich agrarian land. The Ministers requested Israel to assume responsibility for the landmines laying and cluster bombs usage in the south of Lebanon and assume defraying the cost of clearance as well as providing compensation for Lebanon for any ensuing losses and for reclaiming the affected areas in the south of Lebanon for productive purposes.

68. The Ministers supported the inalienable right of Lebanon to utilize its waters in accordance with international law, in particular to ensure the social and economic needs of its population in the

liberated areas and villages. They called on Israel to end its air violations of Lebanese sovereignty and other violations that severely damage the security situation which is a critical factor in promoting the economy and tourism industries.

69. The Ministers reaffirmed the importance of strengthening South-South Cooperation especially in the current international economic environment and reiterated their support for South-South Cooperation as a strategy to sustain the developments efforts of developing countries and a means of enhancing their participation in the emerging global economy. They reiterated the principles of South-South Cooperation as adopted by the Twelfth Session of the Intergovernmental Follow-up and Coordination Committee on Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries (IFCC-XII), which was held from 10 to 13 June 2008 in Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire and stressed that such principles should guide the Group in the preparation of the UN Conference on South-South Cooperation.

70. In this context, the Ministers welcomed the conceptual framework and the set of principles for South-South cooperation contained in the "Yamoussoukro Consensus", and in this regard stressed the following elements that should guide the Group during the preparatory process for the High-level UN Conference on South-South Cooperation:

a. South-South cooperation is a common endeavour of peoples and countries of the South and must be pursued as an expression of South-South solidarity and a strategy for economic independence and self-reliance of the South based on their common objectives and solidarity;

b. South-South cooperation and its agenda must be driven by the countries of the South;

c. South-South cooperation must not be seen as a replacement for North-South cooperation. Strengthening South-South cooperation must not be a measure of coping with the receding interest of the developed world in assisting developing countries;

d. Cooperation between countries of the South must not be analyzed and evaluated using the same standards as those used for North-South relations;

e. Financial contributions from other developing countries should not be seen as Official Development Assistance from these countries to other countries of the South. These are merely expressions of solidarity and cooperation borne out of shared experiences and sympathies;

f. South-South cooperation is a development agenda based on premises, conditions and objectives that are specific to the historic and political context of developing countries and to their needs and expectations. South-South cooperation deserves its own separate and independent promotion;

g. South-South cooperation is based on a strong, genuine, broad-based partnership and solidarity;

h. South-South cooperation is based on complete equality, mutual respect and mutual benefit;

i. South-South cooperation respects national sovereignty in the context of shared responsibility;

j. South-South cooperation strives for strengthened multilateralism in the promotion of an action-oriented approach to development challenges;

k. South-South cooperation promotes the exchange of best practices and support among developing countries in the common pursuit of their broad development objectives (encompassing all aspects of international relations and not just in the traditional economic and technical areas);

l. South-South cooperation is based on the collective self-reliance of developing countries;

m. South-South cooperation seeks to enable developing countries to play a more active role in international policy and decision-making processes, in support of their efforts to achieve sustainable development;

n. The modalities and mechanisms for promoting South-South cooperation are based on bilateral, sub-regional, regional and interregional cooperation and integration as well as multilateral cooperation.

71. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitments to fully implement the Havana Programme of Action, the Marrakech Plan of Implementation of South-South Cooperation and the Doha Plan of Action that taken together represent a comprehensive framework for intensified cooperation among developing countries.

72. The Ministers reiterated their support for the upcoming High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, pursuant to General Assembly Resolutions 62/209 and 63/233 to be held in Nairobi, Kenya, and called for active participation in this conference. In this regard, they expressed appreciation to the Government of Kenya and welcomed the efforts of the UN High Level Committee on South-South Cooperation. The Ministers reiterated the principles on which South-South Cooperation is based, which were adopted by the Foreign Ministers of the Group of 77 and China, at their annual meeting in New York on 26 September 2008.

73. The Ministers reiterated their support to ongoing South-South initiatives undertaken by developing countries and called on Member States to expand their efforts towards strengthening South-South cooperation projects in accordance with the mandate of the Second South Summit. In this context, the Ministers requested the Chairman of the Group of 77 to take necessary steps for the operationalization of the South Fund for Development and Humanitarian Assistance launched on the occasion of IFCC-XII. The Ministers further called on Member States to host sectoral conferences in various fields of cooperation as well as advisory meetings of eminent personalities to update the Development Platform for the South as mandated by the Second South Summit held in Doha, Qatar from 12 to 16 June 2005.

74. The Ministers welcomed the successful outcome of the First G-77 Ministerial Forum on Water Resources in Muscat (Sultanate of Oman) from 23 to 25 February 2009 and expressed their

appreciation to the Government and the people of the Sultanate of Oman for hosting the Forum and for making all the necessary arrangements for reaching a successful outcome.

75. The Ministers welcomed the ongoing preparations by the Academy of Sciences for the Developing World (TWAS) to convene, in collaboration with UNESCO, a meeting of Ministers of Science and Technology of the Member States of the Group of 77 within the framework of the World Science Forum 2009 on 4 November 2009 in Budapest, Hungary and invited Ministers in-charge of science and technology and national academies of sciences and other relevant research institutions in Member States to participate actively in said meeting. The Ministers took note of the efforts by TWAS towards the operationalization of the Consortium on Science, Technology and Innovation for the South (COSTIS), in accordance with the mandate of the Second South Summit held in Doha, Qatar from 12 to 16 June 2005 and the decision by the Meeting of the Ministers of Science and Technology of the Member States of the Group of 77 held in Angra dos Reis, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on 3 September 2006.

76. In this context, the Ministers look forward for the successful preparation and holding of the Thirteenth Session of the Intergovernmental Follow-up and Coordination Committee on Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries (IFCC-XIII) to be held in 2010 in Asia in preparation for the Third South Summit.

77. The Ministers mandated the Chairman of the Group of 77 to undertake consultations with a view to convening the Third South Summit to be held in 2010 in Africa. The Ministers also invited the Chairman to mark the commemoration of the 45th anniversary of the establishment of the Group of 77 at an appropriate occasion in 2009.

78. The Ministers approved the Report of the Twenty-fourth Meeting of the Committee of Experts of the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund for ECDC/TCDC (PGTF) contained in document G-77/AM(XXI)/2009/2 and endorsed its recommendations. The Ministers commended the Chairman of the PGTF for his continued commitment and expressed their satisfaction with the results achieved by the PGTF. In light of the substantial decrease in the interest earnings of the Fund caused by the current world financial situation as reported by the Chairman of the PGTF, the Ministers appealed to every Member State to make a significant one-time contribution to the PGTF on the occasion of the UN Pledging Conference for Development Activities to be held in New York on 9 November 2009.

79. The Ministers approved the Financial Statement of the ECDC Account of the Group of 77 contained in document G-77/AM(XXI)/2009/4, as presented by the Chairman of the Group of 77 and urged those Member States that have not yet done so to make special efforts to pay their outstanding contributions.

80. The Ministers expressed their deep appreciation to the Republic of the Sudan for its able leadership and for the excellent work and tireless efforts as the Chair country of the Group of 77 for 2009. As 2009 proved to be a challenging year for all developing countries, the commitment shown by the Republic of the Sudan as Chair country in pursuing the goals and objectives of the Group of 77 was a source of profound gratitude. The Ministers also commended the efficient work and continued valuable support provided by the secretariat of the Group of 77 in New York to the Chair country and

to the Member States and congratulated the Executive Secretary of the Group of 77 for the achievement award presented to him during the opening ceremony of the Ministerial Meeting in recognition of his outstanding performance, his continued commitment and dedication to the goals and objectives of the Group of 77.

81. The Ministers warmly welcomed the election by acclamation of the Republic of Yemen to the Chairmanship of the Group of 77 for 2010.